



December 19, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians:

I am writing to let you know about another disturbing and unacceptable incident that occurred at our school today. Around 8:05 a.m., a staff member found a noose made from a sweatshirt drawstring hanging in the upper level of a stairwell. A School Resource Officer was immediately alerted, proper evidence was gathered, and the noose was removed. Since this occurred in the midst of student arrival, I am unsure how many students saw the horrible image, but it was taken down as quickly as possible.

Working in tandem with police, we were swiftly able to identify the individual responsible. As is always the case, I cannot discuss more specifics, but the law and Code of Student Conduct will guide the consequences and repercussions associated with this reprehensible act.

I am beside myself that I have to write to you again to not only describe this horrible deed, but to share an exasperation that I know is shared by many of our students and families. Most of our children come to school every day excited to see each other, their teachers, and to learn. The amazing things that happen inside these walls on a daily basis transcend the small-minded, weak acts that I have to keep writing to you about. While I may be tired of such negativity, I am far too inspired by the promise of our students to allow hate and bigotry to have any presence in our school.

This is not just a letter, this is a notice that we will not stop at building and maintaining a community where everyone is respected. In the coming weeks, I hope you will join me for community-building activities in support of unifying the Chesapeake Cluster. Please be on the lookout for more information about upcoming events in support of this effort.

As I have asked before, please speak to your child, in a manner you deem most appropriate, about how hate, bigotry, and intolerance have no place in our school, community, nation, or world. If you are unsure of what to say, please contact our school about resources that can help with such discussions. These discussions could also be beneficial amongst neighbors and friends. These issues are not limited to our schools and we need all of the help we can get in spreading kindness, inclusion, and respect in our community.

Please also know that our school counselors as well as staff in the AACPS Office of Student Services are always available to speak with students and staff about their feelings and concerns regarding the climate of our school. Any safety concern can also be addressed through the Student Safety Hotline at 1-877-676-9854 that can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Sincerely,

Michael Dunn  
Principal

MAD/msm